

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. K 328
Magi No. 1503285711
DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic IMPERIAL HOTEL (preferred)

and/or common IMPERIAL HOTEL, EASTERN SHORE INN

2. Location

street & number 208 High Street ☐ not for publication

city, town Chestertown ☐ vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Kent

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied (1st.bsmt)	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress (2nd 3rd.)	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Robert J. and Janet A. Kestell

street & number 103 Maple Street telephone no.: 301-778-5696

city, town Chestertown, Maryland state and zip code 21620

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kent County Courthouse liber EHP86

street & number High Street folio 295

city, town Chestertown state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Chestertown Survey

date November 1983 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☒ local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust, 21 State Circle, Annapolis, Md.

city, town Town Hall Chestertown, Maryland 21620 state

7. Description

Survey No.

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Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY:

Constructed in 1903, the Imperial Hotel in many ways typifies Neo-Classical commercial row-buildings of the turn of the century. It is a rectangular brick box, three stories tall with a full basement and shallow shed roof. Its symmetrically spaced front fenestration uses wide double-hung windows and centrally located wooden doors. The trim used throughout the building is of the type that was mass-produced and easily available. The most distinctive and unusual architectural feature of the building is its 3-story wooden porch which covers the public sidewalk.

SITE:

The Imperial Hotel is located on the north east side of High Street on a short block which includes three other large late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings. Its immediate northern neighbor is the three-story, yellow-tan brick Chester Theatre built in the 1920's in a Mediterranean Neo-Classical style; to the south and at the corner of the block is a simple, 2½ story frame building with a gable roof pierced by tall dormers. At the northern corner of the block stands the 4-story, red brick Stam Hall with its Second Empire mansard roof and prominent clock tower. Together these structures are the largest-scale group of commercial buildings in Chestertown's historic commercial district; they form a distinct and urban street "wall."

BUILDING FORM:

In its basic form the Imperial Hotel is a rectangular brick box measuring 35 by 60 feet; it is three stories tall with a deep, full-story basement. Its roof is a flat shed which slopes slightly toward the rear. This roof is finished with a bold wooden cornice. The most notable feature of the building is its enormous, three-story front porch which extends across the entire front of the building and over the wide public side walk. A simple, utilitarian wooden porch, also three stories tall, extends across the rear of the building.

FENESTRATION:

In general the building is evenly fenestrated using mass-produced double-hung windows with wooden bull-nosed frames. The street front of the building is three bays wide with a central door and flanking windows on each floor. On the third floor these windows measure 4'10" wide and 4'6" tall. They have 2 over 2 sash with a slender central muntin. On the second floor the same window is used but with a pair of paneled wooden jib doors that open out onto the porch beneath each. The central doors on these floors are wooden sash doors with a pair of raised panels beneath. The panels have applied ogee panel moldings. These doors are quite large - 3'6" by 7'4" - and have heavy screen doors with brackets in the corners of the screens.

Large plate glass store windows with pairs of transom lights are used on the first floor. These window assemblies are approximately eight feet square overall. On this floor the central doorway is recessed about four and one half feet. The door has a transom light above and full length side lights on either side. The door was originally a four panel wooden door detailed to match the doors above. In 1977 modern etched glass panels were installed in the upper panels and sidelights. Sash doors which match the doors above are used in the sides of the recessed doorway and may once have continued

7. DESCRIPTION continued

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provided access to the front rooms. The transom bars of the doorway and windows are reeded and have turned corner blocks.

The basement shops are lighted by windows that match the second and third floor front windows. A doorway leads to each front basement room.

The sides of the building are fenestrated primarily with 2 over 2 double hung wooden windows with segmental brick arches and plain wooden sills. They are arranged in six regular bays along the north side and seven irregular bays along the south elevation. There is a secondary entry leading to a narrow alley on the south elevation of the building and triple double hung windows near the rear of the south elevation first floor in a former office room.

Fenestration on the rear of the building is an irregular combination of casement and double hung windows, some of which have been altered. As on the front, there is a central door on each floor leading to the porch.

MATERIALS OF CONSTRUCTION, MISCELLANEOUS DETAILS:

The face brick of the Imperial Hotel is hard-surfaced, sharp-edged, dark red brick laid with narrow mortar joints in American bond. The sides and rear are laid in common brick.

The wooden cornice of the roof is boxed with an ogee crownmolding, modillion blocks, and a deep wooden fascia.

The three story front porch extends about twelve feet forward from the building and is covered with a shallow, hipped roof. The ceilings at each level are beaded porch ceiling boarding. The floors of the second and third level are fir boarding; the concrete sidewalk serves as the first floor. Each porch level is carried on round simple Doric Columns of wood. The cornice at each level is finished with an ogee crown molding and flat rectangular modillion blocks beneath the cornice box. The porch railings are wooden with plain, closely-spaced rectangular balusters.

Leading to the basement level are two concrete stairs which provide access to two doors which enter the two basement shops. Along the edge of the stair wells is a wrought iron railing with scroll-work at corners and level changes.

INTERIOR:

The upper three floors are organized with a central 7 foot-wide corridor with 12'6" wide rooms on either side. On the first floor there are three rooms on either side with a bathroom and storage closet at the rear of the south side. In 1977 the first floor was remodeled into a series of seven shop rooms entered by a collection of Victorian doors salvaged from demolished Eastern Shore buildings. Three projecting bay windows incorporating salvaged Victorian brackets and cornice moldings were built along the south side of the interior corridor. The third room back on the north side retains its corner fireplace with its inset cast iron coal grate. The cornice is wooden with two tiers of shelves each supported by slender composite columns. Set into the overmantle is a beveled mirror. The hearth is tan and brown tile. The original interior trim on the first floor is made up of a shallow fillet-ogee-head-ogee-fillet and is 4" wide. New trim added in the 1977 remodeling is the same width with a double-route to suggest a Victorian motif. Both are used with turned antique corner blocks. The original trim on the second floor matches that on the first. On the third floor simple 3½" beaded trim is used. Original doors throughout the building are standard 4-panel wooden doors. Yellow pine flooring was used on the upper floors. The first floor has modern maple strip floors or carpet.

7. DESCRIPTION continued

The second and third floors are now essentially gutted although the floors and most interior window trim remain in place. Most doors have 2-light transoms above. The only original stair remaining inside runs from the second to the third floor. It is a straight-run, closed string oak stair with square newel posts and plain balusters. A second enclosed stair leads to the south side entry from the second floor.

When the interior plaster on the second floor of the building was demolished, an eight-foot arch was discovered leading to the front room on the south side of the corridor. On the original plans this room was labeled "Parlour." Evidently this floor was used for public functions; a Dining Room, Butler's Pantry, Kitchen and storage pantry as well as 2 bedrooms were also planned on this floor. On the third floor were eleven small rooms and one bath.

PRESENT USE:

In the basement is a beauty shop and storage. On the ground floor is an art gallery and restaurant. Renovating the upper floors is under consideration.

OUTBUILDINGS:

Behind the Imperial Hotel but entered from Queen Street is a 2-story frame stable. Although now a part of the hotel property it was originally a part of an L-shaped parcel of land which included 102 N. Queen Street (K-339) and the Geddes-Piper House (K-24), a 1790's town house which is now the headquarters of the Kent County Historical Society. The barn appears to have been constructed between 1877 and 1885 by George Wescott.

The stable has a steeply pitched but assymetrical roof edged with a wooden "gingerbread" scallop. A wooden cupola with wooden finial and louvered sides sets atop the ridge. The building is entered by four pairs of wooden barn doors on long wrought iron hinges. It is covered with lapped siding. The feeding troughs for the horses remain on the north wall.

The building is heavy timber construction with diagonal bracing and plates pegged into corner posts. This system is typical of barn construction in Kent County except that the corner posts of this stable appear to be set into the ground rather than resting on a foundation with sill. This has lead to serious deterioration and the building is now in near-derelect condition.

8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates Designed 1902, Built ¹⁹⁰³ Builder/Architect E. L. Rice, Jr. Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

SIGNIFICANCE SUMMARY:

The Imperial Hotel is a significant example of simple neo-classical commercial buildings of the turn of the century, and one of the few such buildings in Chestertown's Historic District. It makes the structure a distinctive part of the lower High Street streetscape. Because original architectural drawings exist for the building, its original floor plan is known. The room designations and the mechanical and ventilating systems shown are important documents of late Victorian building use and design.

HISTORY:

The Imperial Hotel was designed by Architect E. L. Rice, Jr. of Wilmington, Delaware for Wilbur W. Hubbard, Esq. as a hotel, store, and office for Mr. Hubbard, a local fertilizer manufacturer. (Blue print copies made from Mr. Rice's original ink and ink wash on oil cloth are enclosed. Note changes in the front door and porch columns.) The building retained this after 1915 when it was leased by a Chestertown women's group, Federated Clubs, and renamed the "Eastern Shore Inn." But in 1918 the women's venture failed and the second and third floors were converted into boarding apartments. Gradually the building deteriorated into low-cost apartments and run-down commercial rental space. Its porches and carriage house began to sag. The stairway connecting the first to the second floor was replaced by a stair leading to the south side door.

In 1977 Robert and Seiko Behr renovated the first floor of the building into shops and repaired the front porches. One of the first restorations of Victorian buildings in this sector of Chestertown, the work was intended to provide inexpensive but attractive rental retail spaces for fledgling businesses as well as to revitalize a prominent commercial structure. The project, combined with aggressive advertising on the part of the "Imperial Hotel Shops," successfully reestablished the building's identity in Chestertown.

SIGNIFICANCE:

The building's greatest significance lies in its place in the street scape of lower High Street, Chestertown's major commercial street. Its three-story porches are distinctive, providing shelter for shoppers as well as an exciting view down the street to the Chester River. It is the only such porch remaining in the town.

The Imperial Hotel also serves as an example of a Neo-classical building of the turn-of-the-century. Its form and detailing are simple and use primarily mass produced building parts, but the structure has a feeling of graciousness because of its shaped moldings, high ceilings, and wide hallway. Little building was occurring in Chestertown from the 1890's until the First World War; this is one of the few commercial structures of that period and probably the most distinctive.

The public dining room and parlour as well as the small private rooms and few bathrooms illustrate the kind of transient accommodation favored in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Meals were provided and the guests were expected to participate in communal activities in the parlour and porch. Privacy was a lesser concern.

The original drawings document clearly the Victorian concern for ventilation in rooms. Although the entire building was heated by radiators with water heated by a coal-fired boiler in the basement, there are a series of brick chimney stacks - 13 in all - rising inside the side and rear walls of the structure. Only one of these stacks, the one running to the boiler room, was designed to carry smoke. The others were fitted with opening grilles, probably set close to the floor, and intended to ventilate stale air, considered unhealthy, from the rooms. The night air was also thought by the Victorians to be unhealthy, hence having windows in sleeping rooms was not a sufficient ventilating system. The brick ventilating chimneys were considered a necessity.

The Imperial Hotel Stable is typical of the many stables that once existed in the interiors of the blocks in downtown Chestertown.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. K-328

Kent County Land Records

Kent County News

Bothe, Chris. "The Grand Old Lady of Chestertown" in Shorewoman Magazine, Spring 1977, pp.18-21.

Sanborn Map of 1885

The 1877 Atlas of Chestertown, Maryland

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

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Zone Easting NorthingB

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Zone Easting NorthingC

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marsha Fritz, Assoc.

organization Chesapeake Associated Architects, Inc. date November 5, 1983

street & number 104 Church Alley telephone 301-778-4899

city or town Chestertown state Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Washington D.C. 20240

JEF

K-328

HISTORIC PRESERVATION CERTIFICATION
APPLICATION—PART 1

Instructions: Applicant should read the instructions carefully before completing application. No certification may be made unless a complete application form has been received. Use typewriter or print clearly in dark ink to complete the application form. If additional spaces needed to complete Part 1, use the reverse side or a separate plain sheet of paper clearly indicating the owner's name and mailing address. Part 1 of this application may be completed and sent to the appropriate State Historic Preservation Officer at anytime during the year.

MAR 12 1984

PART 1 EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

1. Name of property: Imperial Hotel MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
Address of property: 202 High Street
City Chestertown County Kent State Md. Zip Code 21620
Name of historic district in which property is located: Chestertown Historic District

Check here if request is for:

- ☒ certification (structure contributes to significance of the district)
☐ decertification (structure does not contribute to significance of the district)
☐ easement qualification (for donation of easement on structure or land for conservation purposes).

2. Description of Physical Appearance:
(see instructions for map and photograph requirements—use reverse side if necessary)

Please see attached sheets.

3. Statement of Significance:
(use reverse side if necessary)

Please see attached sheets

Date of construction (if known): 1903 ☒ Original site ☐ Moved ☐ Date of alterations (if known): _____

4. Name and Mailing Address of ~~Owner~~ Contract Purchaser;

1. Rehabilitation of first floor: 1977
2. Demolition of interior of second & third floors: about 1980

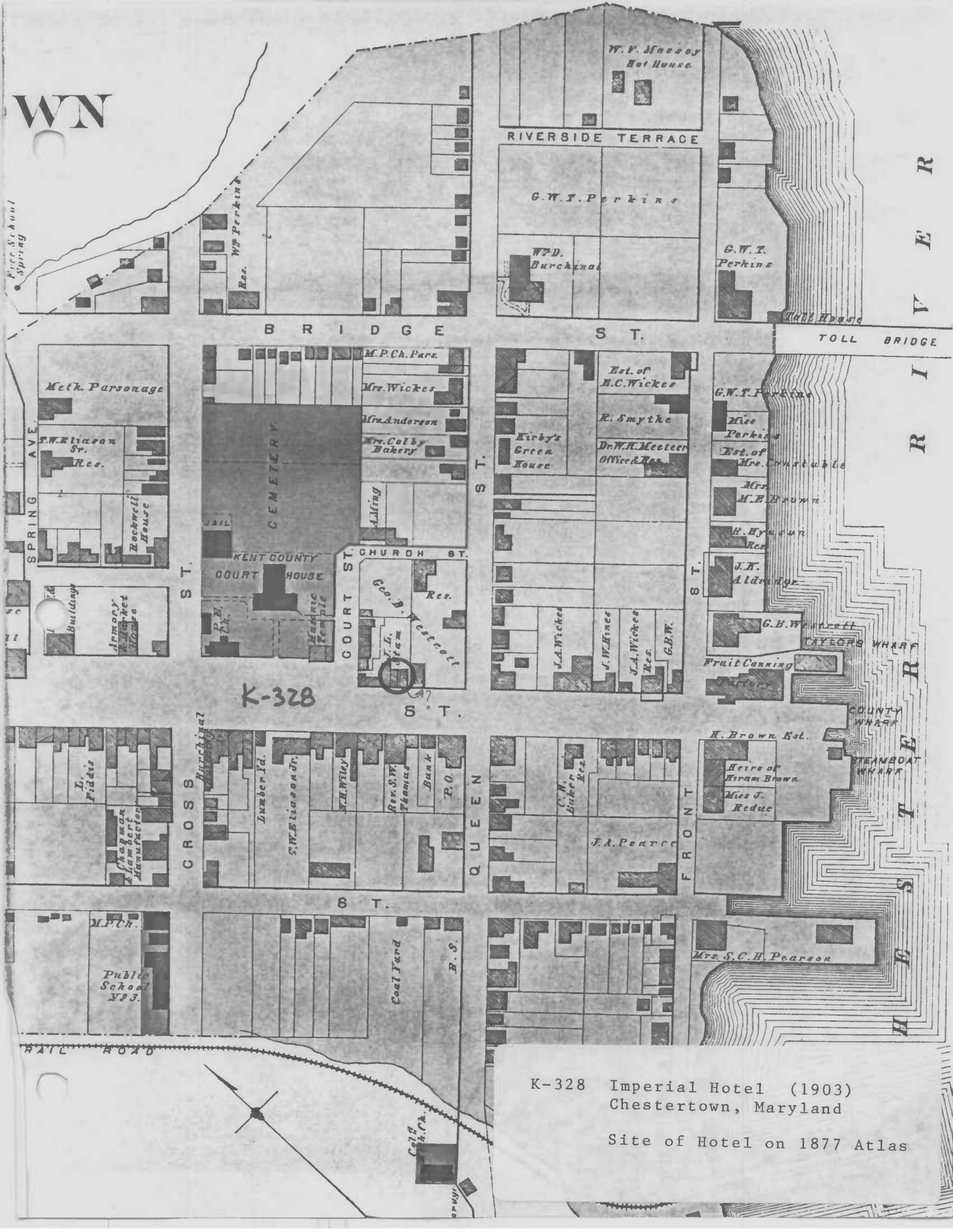
Name Mr. & Mrs. George W. DeanStreet 116 E. High St.City Chestertown State Md. Zip Code 21620Telephone number (during day): Area Code 301-778-0071

I hereby attest that the information I have provided is to the best of my knowledge, correct, and that I am owner of the property described above.

Signature Jane W. Dean Date 3-3-84Social Security Number or Taxpayer Identification Number 419-66-0352

for office use only

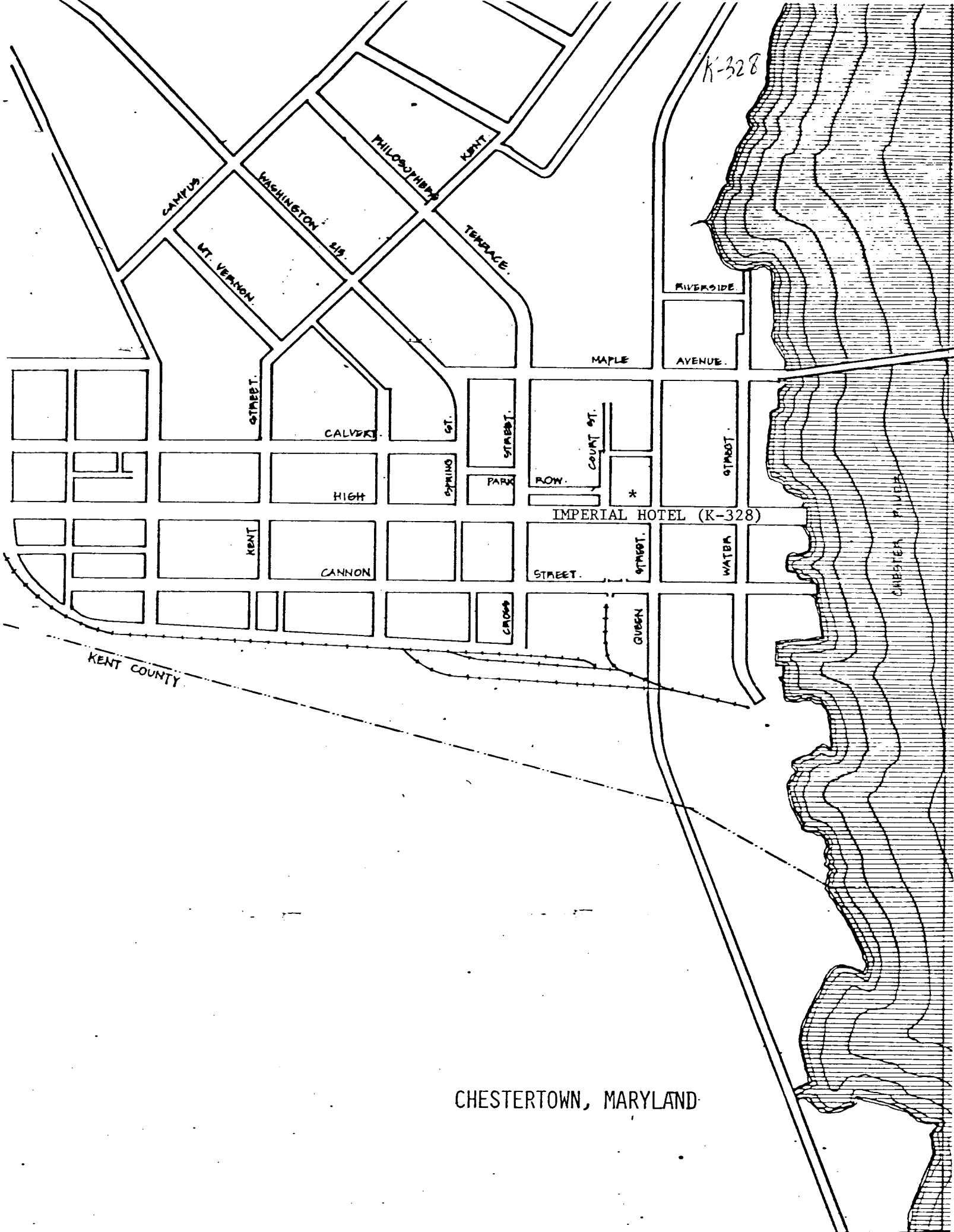
The structure described above is included within the boundaries of a Registered Historic District and ☐ contributes ☐ does not contribute to the character of the district.The structure ☐ appears ☐ does not appear to meet National Register Criteria for Evaluation (36 CFR 60.6) and ☐ will likely ☐ will not be nominated to the National Register in accord with the Department of the Interior procedures (36 CFR 60).The structure is located in a district which ☒ appears ☐ does not appear to meet National Register Criteria for Evaluation (36 CFR 60.6) and ☒ will likely ☐ will not be nominated to the National Register in accord with Department of the Interior procedures (36 CFR 60). and ☒ appears ☐ does not appear to contribute to the character of said district or ☒ will likely ☐ will not be recommended for certification as substantially meeting National Register criteria.Signature [Signature] Date 4-3-84
State Historic Preservation Officer



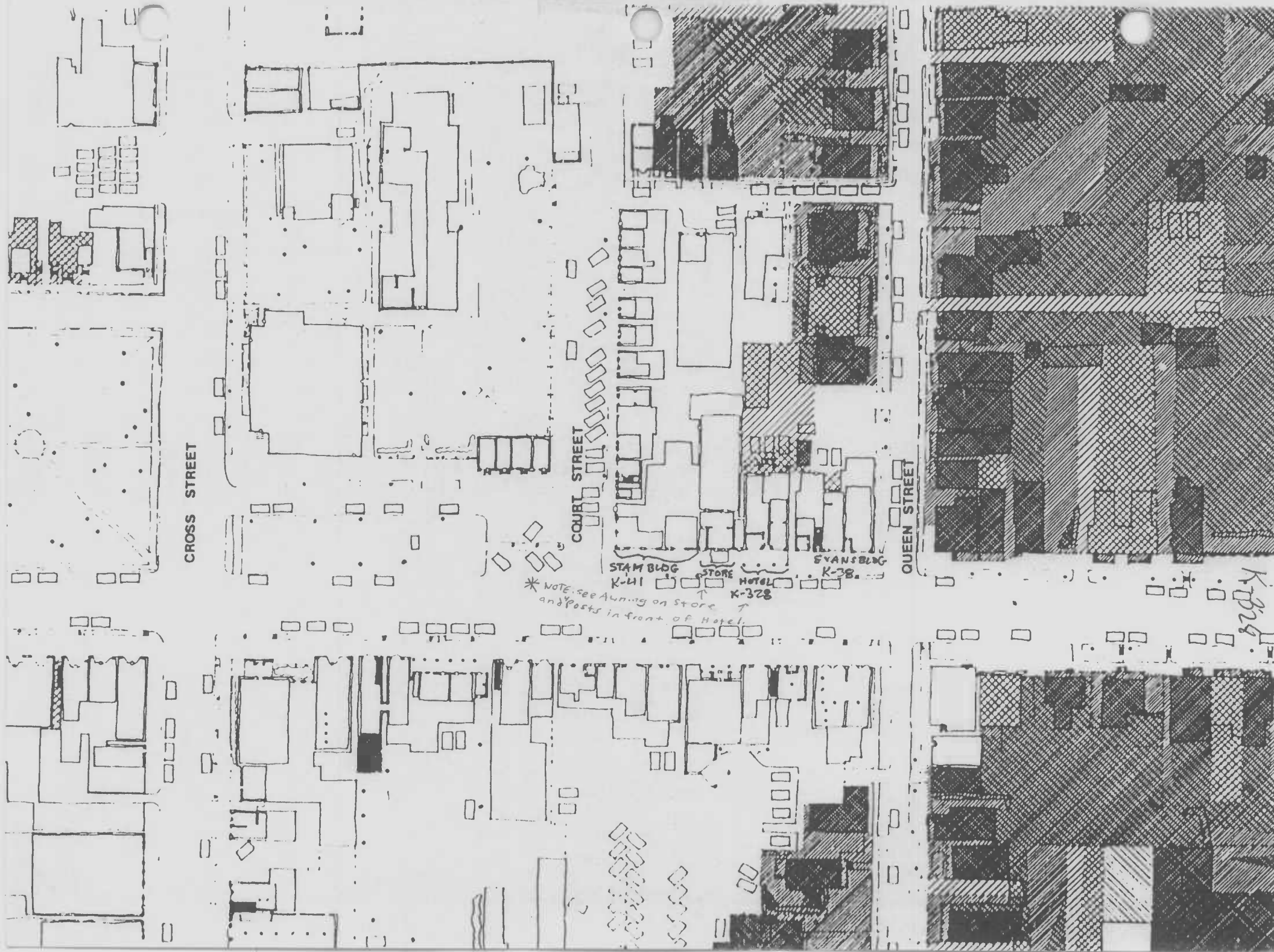
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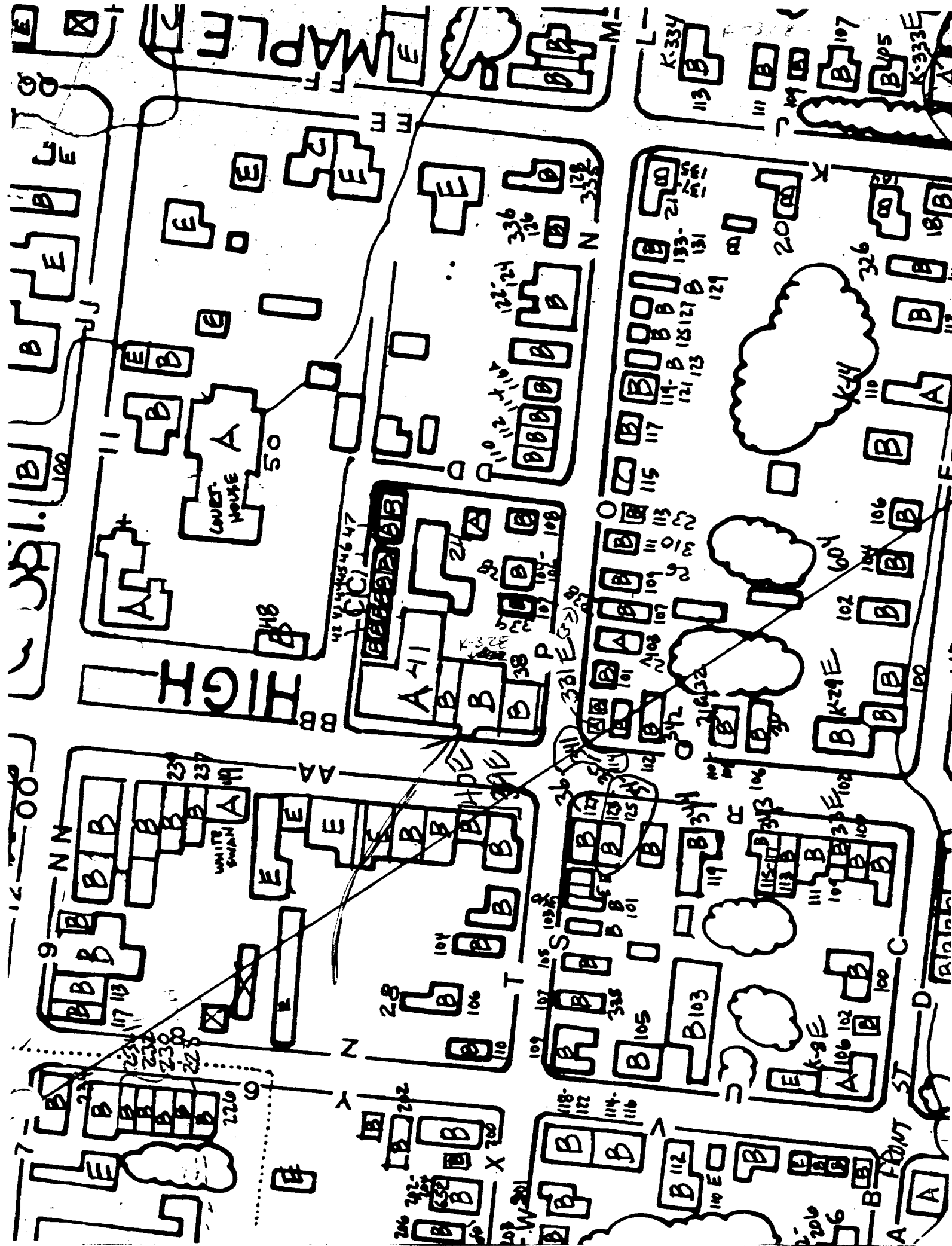
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K-328 Imperial Hotel (1903)
Chestertown, Maryland
Site of Hotel on 1877 Atlas



CHESTERTOWN, MARYLAND







K-233 Imperial Hotel
Chesletown, Md

11/1783

R. Auster, Uklenesky

208 High Street



K-238

Imperial Hotel, Staples
208 High Street, Chesterton
11/1983 R. Austin Walmesley